

2015

Party Line Newsletter Spring 2015

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The Party Line

Hollins University Political Science Newsletter
Spring 2015

Inside this issue:

1-2 - Hollins, Sweet Briar, A Road Ahead

2-3 - Boston Stronger

3-4 - Domestic Violence Act

5 - Anthea Butler

5-6 - Lindsey Burke

6-7 - Faith in Jamaica

7 - A Year Abroad

8-9 - Britain's Seven-Way Debate

9-10 - #BlackLivesMatter

10-11 - #IStandWithIsrael

11-12 - Technology, Social Change in Cuba

13 - Chocolate, Genocide, Choice

13-14 - Student and Alumnae News

Hollins, Sweet Briar, A Road Ahead

Amaris Elliott '15

When President James Jones of Sweet Briar College announced on March 3 that this year's graduation will be the school's last, it hit our campus hard. The loss of a fellow women's college is devastating, particularly one so close to our own in vision, location and history. Long



Photo Credit: hollins.edu/news

considered to be rivals, the vixens are really sisters. In celebration of their legacy and in solidarity with their struggle, Hollins students wore pink and green following the announcement. This gesture was the first in a series of similar efforts to reach out to the Sweet Briar community and welcome students into ours.

As part of a teach-out agreement between SBC, Mary Baldwin College, Randolph College and Hollins, Sweet Briar students are able to transfer their credits and class ranking and graduate as scheduled. This administrative effort to ease the transition for students extends a similar responsibility to the receiving student bodies. It is crucial to recognize and be sensitive to the fact that a person's alma mater is a part of his/her/their identity. It should be our hope that eventually Hollins will become a part of that identity as well, but in the meantime, welcome and celebrate the unique Sweet Briar community inside of ours. In doing so, we preserve the Sweet Briar legacy and grow our own.

Yet, the elephant in the room remains to be addressed. Diane Halpern, author of *The Pseudoscience of Single-Sex Education*, wrote in the *New York Times* recently, "As a small, rural arts women's college {SB} was fighting an uphill battle against many trends in higher education."

CONTINUED ON 2

Hollins, Sweet Briar (continued)

She notes a decline in women's institutions over the last century, dropping from more than 230 to 44. Does that mean women's education is in danger?

Well, yes and no. While it would be remiss to say that women's education is thriving, its decline does not mean its death. Many higher education institutions for women were founded at a time when major colleges only admitted males, mainly white males. When male colleges began to expand admissions policies, the education market for women broadened. That market continued to expand with the proliferation of community colleges and technical schools, whose admissions costs are much lower than private, women's colleges. Although more women go to college today than ever before, they have more options than ever before as well.

Adding further difficulty, a *New York Times* article by Diana Schemo points out that many students choose a single-sex institution in spite of that fact, rather than because of it. Despite recent studies by the National Education Association that suggest single-sex education environments have a higher learning efficacy, interest in them among high school seniors remains less than three percent. Former President of Randolph-Macon, Ginger Wordon, spoke in 2006 when the college decided to go co-ed, "Undoubtedly there is a place for women's colleges. What is missing is the market for it."

President Gray was swift to reassure our community that it is safe, and stressed that the fiscal situations of Hollins and Sweet Briar are very different. While there isn't the need for panic, there is room for reasonable concern. Hollins as an enterprise is thriving, its endowment growing yearly; but as a school, we face the same enrollment issues as Sweet Briar. It is critical to recognize this type of education is a niche that we must protect and promote in order to ensure its survival. Perpetuity depends on our individual reinvestment in this community.

Boston Stronger

Deborah Birch '15

April 15, 2013. The day started off as a joyous and beautiful Patriots' Day in Boston, Massachusetts with the kids off from school and families all together downtown whether it be to spend time in the city or attend the Red Sox game across town at Fenway Park. People outside of New England however know about Patriots' Day for another reason: the Boston Marathon. Runners from all over the United States and representing a wide range of countries that qualify to run flock to Boston every year on the third Monday of April for the Marathon, with its iconic finish line on Boylston Street after the completion of a grueling 26 miles 385 yards. This Marathon ended in panic, loss, and terror when two pressure cooker bombs went off at 2:49 PM, just twelve seconds apart. These two bombs killed three people and injured another estimated 264.

Three days of grief, anger, and speculation later, on April 18 the FBI released the names and pictures of the main suspects in the case: Chechan brothers Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev. Shortly after the release of these images, the two brothers carjacked an SUV and killed MIT Officer Sean Collier before engaging in gunfire with police in Watertown, MA. An MBTA police officer was seriously injured and survived despite suffering massive blood loss and Tamerlan Tsarnaev was shot multiple times before his brother fled the scene, running over and killing Tamerlan in the process. A massive manhunt ensued for to find Dzhokhar, which came to an end on April 19, with his successful capture from where he was hiding under a boat in the backyard of a Watertown resident.

It didn't take long for people to call for the death of Tsarnaev, who claims that his older brother was the mastermind. Two years later on April 8, 2015 and exactly a week from the two-year anniversary of the bombings, justice has been brought against Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. After 91 witnesses from the prosecution and four by the defense, a jury of average citizens reached a guilty verdict on all 30 charges brought against Tsarnaev. The first 17 of those convictions carry the death penalty, so now the same jury of our peers will determine whether he will spend his life in prison or receive a death sentence. No matter what the jury decides in Tsarnaev's sentencing, one thing is clear: he feels no regret or remorse for his actions. He did not even look at the final witness of the prosecution or the images presented, which described and showed how these bombs tore apart Martin Richard who was only 8 years old when he was killed by the Tsarnaev brothers.

CONTINUED ON 3



Boston Stronger (continued)

If Dzhokhar Tsarnaev can't even feel even a speck of regret and remorse for his actions leading to the gruesome death of an innocent 8-year-old boy, how do we expect him to feel any regret or remorse for any of his actions?

The conviction of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev brings a great deal of closure to the horrific events that took place on April 15, 2013, but it is only just another step. Boston bombing victim Jeff Bauman, who had both of his legs blown off by the bombs, responded to the verdict by stating: "Today's verdict will never replace the lives that were lost and so dramatically changed. But it is a relief, and one step closer to closure." Justice may have been served, but we still mourn the loss of those due to the Tsarnaevs: Krystle Marie Campbell (29), Lu Lingzi (23), Officer Sean Collier (27), and Martin Richard (8). We sympathize with those injured. We remain united and won't be afraid. Following the bombings, the phrase Boston Strong was used to show solidarity and the strength and pride of the people of Boston. Boston has always been strong, but after today we are Boston Stronger.

Domestic Violence Act: legislating human rights in South Africa**Lachelle Roddy '15**

The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 is regarded as one of the most progressive pieces of legislation internationally for the protection of women against violence. The act explains the obligations of police forces and the courts in handling domestic violence disputes and protecting victims. The DVA places the burden on the perpetrator of abuse to leave spaces once shared with the victim, and in some cases to provide financial support. It also acknowledges that domestic violence is a serious offense and extends the definition to anyone who cohabits such as unmarried women in relationships, same sex partners, and children and their parents. The World Health Organization reported in 2011 that about sixty thousand women and children in South Africa had experienced domestic violence, which is the highest reported rate in the world. The rates however, may be even higher, due to silence or lack of reporting surrounding abuse happening in rural areas. Unfortunately, while the Domestic Violence Act is progressive, it has done little to decrease the high rate of abuse towards women.

The Independent reported in 2011 that as many as following the procedures ordered According to Section 2 of the must provide three key services dispute. The police must help medical attention, provide language of choice, and explain notice to the complainant in full. women were misinformed that press charges against their abuser, and 96% who went to police stations were not informed of their right to a protection order. Even more troubling, the police stations recorded only 19 of 416 incidents in the domestic violence register.

"...53% of women were misinformed that they did not have the right to press charges against their abuser, and 96% who went to police stations were not informed of their right to a protection order..."

Complaints Directorate (ICD) 65% of police stations were not by the Domestic Violence Act. Domestic Violence Act, police at the scene of a domestic the complainant find shelter and notices to complainant in their the rights and protections of the The ICD found that 53% of they did not have the right to

According to Section 4 of the Domestic Violence Act, any complainant can file for a protection order. If the complainant has no legal representative, the clerk of the court must give the complainant information about their right to file for a protection order and what relief is available under the act. The application may be brought to the court by an outside party representing the complaint, with written consent, such as a counselor, a health care provider, a social worker, or a police officer. Any minor or someone on behalf of a minor can apply to the court without the assistance of parents or guardians. Applications may be brought to the court outside of its normal hours of operation if the court believes the situation needs immediate attention. This portion of the act extends protection and lifts burdens on the victim by allowing flexibility in who represents the victim in filing for the order, and when the court can be called upon to look over the case. It is especially helpful to the victim, if a minor, that legal guardians are not required to file for the protection order, considering domestic abuse may be happening between a guardian and a child. *CONTINUED ON 4*

Domestic Violence Act continued

Section 7 of the Domestic Violence Act states that the protection order prohibit the respondent from several offenses which are subject to arrest and imprisonment. These offenses include but are not limited to, committing any domestic violence, entering a residence shared by the complainant and respondent, or entering the complainant's residence or place of employment. These restrictions on the respondent are effective in ensuring that the respondent is not able to keep a complainant from living in an area they shared, and ensuring the complainant has a safe space to live, free from fear of abuse. The restrictions also place the burden of finding a new shelter on the respondent rather than on the complainant, who must already deal with the stress of healing from the abuse. In addition, the court may order the respondent to provide payment of rent or emergency relief funds to the complainant. While these restrictions and obligations placed on the respondent can be extremely helpful to the complainant, the ICD found that police stations failed to implement this part of the act. There was a breach of protection orders, and respondents who violated obligations were not arrested nor were they warned. In addition, in some cases the complainant was left by the police forces to serve the protection order to the respondent themselves, leaving them at a risk for more abuse at the hands of an angry respondent.

The "Domestic Violence Act Implementation: 10 Year Review" found that the Domestic Violence Act did little to decrease the domestic abuse due to "under resourcing, under prioritization, under training, and non-compliance." The review committee found that police submit reports of domestic violence by the act. The police were not aware of reports every six months, displaying that responsibilities. The police force must be Domestic Violence Act and be held every six months.

"...the Domestic Violence Act did little to decrease the domestic abuse due to under resourcing, under prioritization, under training, and non-compliance."

Another weakness in the place obligations on medical service well as the police force and court system. requires the police officer to find the needed medical services, it does not ensure discriminated against by other social. For example, there is still secondary victimization of LGBTQIA people when they reach out to service providers for help after violent domestic attacks such as "corrective" rape. Service providers can sometimes have negative attitudes and prejudices against LGBTQIA people and attacks may not be taken seriously, or victims may receive negative reactions from service providers when revealing their sexuality. In addition, shelters may not be equipped with safe spaces for LGBTQIA people, and counselors may not be properly trained to handle issues affecting the LGBTQIA community. This can cause complainants to delay or avoid seeking help all together.

failed to keep adequate records and incidents every six months as required their obligation under the act to submit there was confusion surrounding police required to learn the contents of the accountable by submitting their reports

Domestic Violence Act is its failure to providers and social departments as While the Domestic Violence Act complainant safe shelter and any that the complainant will not be institutions such as medical facilities.

It seems as if the failure of the South African Domestic Violence Act is due mostly to a lack of funding, training, and implementation rather than the legislation itself. Providing more funding to ending domestic violence should be a top priority of the government. Advocacy groups have suggested that funding should be put into the installation of security equipment for in public spaces, the hiring and training of more staff to prevent and respond to domestic violence, and research and education programs. With an appropriate budget, the implementation of the act can be properly monitored by trained staff. Further research would need to be conducted to determine how often there is gendered discrimination by government institutions during a case, and education and training programs on gender equity will need to be funded to offset discrimination caused by a history and culture of patriarchal dominance under apartheid. Educational efforts on gender equity and sex education should be directed towards all areas of community including schools, religious organizations, government departments, medical facilities, and police forces.

There is also a prevalence of victims dropping the protection order process when respondents and family members become angry and encourage complainants to forget the order. Educational institutions and government providers should therefore seek to protect, trust, and encourage victims to speak up about abuse, thereby squashing the culture of silence which causes under reporting. Even more important, community members need to be brought together to discuss the prevalence of gender based violence and how the act can best be implemented. The people of South Africa themselves need to be accepting of the act as a response to crime rather than a deterrent to cultural norms.

Butler speaks on religion, bleak environment for women throughout world

Victoria West '15

This semester the esteemed Dr. Anthea Butler visited Hollins University in celebration of International Women's Day. Although this speech was meant to celebrate an important date, Butler quickly let the audience know that her presentation would not be a cheery one; arguing that heteropatriarchal religion serves as the foundation upon which the oppression of women is built.

Butler began with historical context for her speech, showing a clip from Hillary Clinton's speech at the 1997 International Women's Day conference where she explained that millions of people were being persecuted and killed across the world simply because they are women. Throughout the speech Butler detailed the numerous challenges for women throughout the world and presented daunting statistics. Butler spoke extensively about the lack of educational opportunities for women in mainly developing and poor nations. She mentioned several reasons for the decline of these opportunities, one of the most poignant being that in many cases women do not have a safe place to use the restroom at schools. For many people in poor nations restrooms are scarce and require a great deal of walking in unsafe conditions. Butler claims that these conditions can be more daunting for young women as they fear being raped or attacked on their way to use the restroom. This lack of safe access to a restroom often becomes an insurmountable challenge for young girls when they begin menstruation. Thus for many girls throughout the world, the start of their period means the end of their education. Butler then continued with discouraging statistics about the increase in child brides throughout some parts of the world and the increasing prevalence of rape in India.

All of these statistics and stories were disheartening but by far the most overwhelming example of persecution against women was the case of the Boko Haram abductions in Nigeria in early 2014 where every 300 young girls were taken from their school. Butler claimed that not only were the girls taken for religious reasons by Islamic extremists, but they were also not sought after following their abduction for religious reasons. Butler claimed that the Nigerian government did not care to get the girls back because they had most likely been raped and therefore were sullied and no longer any good from a religious perspective. Butler claimed the Nigerian government is apathetic to retrieving the girls, explaining that the Prime Minister of Nigeria left the weekend after the abduction to throw his daughter's wedding where they gave out gold iPhones as gifts.

Butler continued to argue that religion in general is persecuting and limiting women. She pointed out the lack of roles for women in the church and especially the lack of roles in leadership positions in the church. In her opinion, there will be a married pope before there is a pope that is a woman. This serves her point that the church and religion in general is creating an environment that persecutes and limits women.



Photo Credit: antheabutler.com

Lindsey Burke: common core vs. free market

Amaris Elliott '15

This year's second Cocke Foundation speaker, Lindsey Burke, addressed Hollins on April 6. Mrs. Burke graduated from Hollins in 2005 with a bachelor's degree in political science; she received her master's in foreign language education from the University of Virginia. In 2008, she joined the Heritage Foundation as a research assistant; today, she is the Will Skillman fellow in education policy. She addressed the federal role in education policy during her discussion titled "The Free Market v. The Common Core, and the future of public education."

According to the CC website, the standards aim to, "ensure all students, regardless of where they live, are graduating high school prepared for college, career, and life." It goes on to report that CC standards are informed by the best state standards already in existence, the experience of teachers, content experts, states, leading thinkers and feedback from the public. Its critics allege that it negatively affects the curriculum by forcing educators to "teach to the test," and reduces the amount of time spent on classic literature, art and history. They also suggest that the "new language" of CC is confusing and overly complicates questions. *CONTINUED ON 6*

Lindsey Burke continued

For instance, what the “old language” referred to as “carrying the one” is now “regroup ten ones as a ten.” “Borrow” is now “take a ten and regroup it as ten ones.” These changes in phrasing are meant to build a deeper understanding of numbers and math processes by using a how *and* why approach.

Burke added that CC standards are lower than those of public schools in Massachusetts and Minnesota, and are much lower than foreign countries that score high in math. Also, the curriculum does not produce results of an exceptional, or substantially improved, quality. Last, she noted that control and input are taken from parents and teachers with CC; there is no flexibility or variation that allows instructors to adjust to individual classroom needs.

Utilizing a chart of different types of spending, Burke illustrated that the best quality purchase is one made for the self with the self’s money, and the worst is one made for someone else with someone else’s money. She extended this to federal involvement in education and firmly assessed that parents should have control of their child’s education because they are the ones most invested in its success. At this point, she introduced Education Savings Accounts as a viable alternative to state education woes. ESAs take 90% of the funds that would be spent on a student in the public school system and deposit them onto a restricted use debit card that can be used to purchase supplies, learning materials, tutors, and educational therapies, effectively allowing parents to create and customize their child’s education. Unused funds roll over from year to year and can be used to cover the cost of college later. Florida and Arizona have already opted into ESAs but, as Burke described, “are somewhat flying the plane while building it.”

The first criticism of ESAs has to do with accountability, for funds and for educational content. Programs and materials must be approved before being purchased and are monitored by local education officials; “A list of pre-approved services and providers is growing daily,” says Burke. But there are no overarching educational requirements for ESAs. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is learning the appropriate materials at the desired pace, but officials may ask to see a student’s work at any point for any reason. Some questions have been raised about parental bias in learning material, particularly in regard to the creationism vs. evolution debate, but also things like human rights and climate change. The extent and nature of oversight these programs will receive remains to be seen as they develop.

Another concern raised is that ESAs are unfairly biased toward the wealthy and affluent because they rely on parents having the time and know-how to craft an education curriculum. This is unlikely for middle-class, working or single parent families or those who speak English as a second language. Although Burke and other ESA supporters think that competition between public and private schools for students and funds will drive up the quality of education and put downward pressure on prices, critics fear it will negatively affect the public schools where the children of less affluent families most often attend.

The presentation conveyed a lot of useful information and raised many good questions regarding education policy today. Although discussants from the audience were skeptical, the overall tone of the Q&A session was one of intrigue. Despite criticism, ESAs offer an alternative to standard learning systems and, depending on how they are pursued, have the potential to radically alter our education system for the better.

Faith in State: the Jamaica cultural immersion**Tanisha Hollingsworth ‘14**

The Jamaica Cultural Immersion Program is such a rewarding experience! Both the fall and spring courses have allowed me to better understand Jamaica’s unique history and many cultures. During the week of spring break, our Jamaica

Cultural Immersion team stayed in Lucea, a small town near Montego Bay. While in Lucea, our team was given the opportunity to teach at the local basic, primary, junior high, and high schools. We were also given the chance to spend time with the residents at the Hanover Infirmary. However, before we left for Jamaica, our team took part in community based learning projects in Roanoke so that we could better prepare us for our time in Lucea. Most of these projects included spending time at the West End Center, an education program for students in the local community, and Friendship Manor for assisted living. *CONTINUED ON 7*



Photo Credit: hollins.edu

Faith in State continued

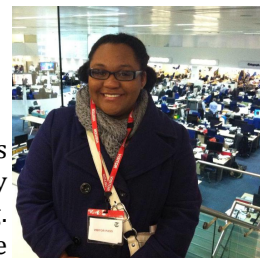
After spending time at both the West End Center and the Lucea public schools, I noticed a major difference in the curriculum. Many of the children at the West End Center attend Roanoke public schools, but none of them have discussed religion with me. However, it plays a major role in the students' lives in Lucea. After multiple conversations with some of the children, I realized they were familiar with Biblical scriptures. They were even comfortable taking part in public prayer. Although religion is not a part of the curriculum in most public schools in America due to the separation of church and state, religion or faith based topics are a significant part of the curriculum in the Lucea public schools.

At least once a week, the students, teachers, and principal at each school gather together for morning devotions. These gatherings include songs of praise and worship as well as Biblical lessons and a period of prayer. The principal leads the school in morning devotion as she leads the songs. The students then listen as the principal tells a Bible story in support of a memory verse before closing in prayer. She will then proceed to give the weekly announcements before the students and teachers return to their classrooms.

Religion did not only surface in the schools, but also in the infirmary. Many of the residents requested for our team members to read the Bible. While this was not an activity requested by the individuals at Friendship Manor, reading the Bible was certainly important to many of the residents at the Hanover Infirmary and I often found myself reading multiple times during my time there. Although I was aware of Jamaica's Christian foundation, it was interesting to see how religion played a role in many aspects of life for the people in Lucea. I was especially surprised to see a woman speak on Biblical scripture before introducing a gospel quartet on the morning news. The more I observed and spoke to different individuals in Lucea, the more I realized that faith plays a key role in Jamaica's political realm.

A year abroad

Tayler Morris '16



I'm dreading the question, "how was your time abroad?" How could I possibly respond? "It was good. Great. Terrifying. Maddening. Challenging. Freeing. Liberating. The emotions I felt from day to day, over the past seven months, have been kaleidoscopic to say the least. I was attracted to Hollins because of its abroad options and the International Programs department sold me that this was the place for me. Nevertheless, I had not considered a full, year-long abroad experience. I will always remember the day I considered a year abroad. A mentor of mine simply suggested, "why not go for a full year?" I thought, "hell no". I would not miss my junior year especially my fall semester- turning twenty- one with my best friends, participating some of my favorite Hollins traditions, Tinker Day and Ring Night. I couldn't do that to myself. But she continued to explain the benefits, helping me to look at all of my options from every angle. So in a democratic fashion, I called a family meeting of my closest friends and introduced the idea. I was a met with 'hell no's', 'won't forgive you if you abandon us's', and total support for whatever I chose to do. So with this support at home and at Hollins, I embarked on a journey of a lifetime.

My first European adventure has been a lengthy one; beginning in September with a semester in Barcelona, Spain; continuing with Christmas and New Year in Germany and Short Term in Madrid. Now, I am closing out this academic year at Hollins Abroad: London with a few Hollins sisters. I've felt the exhilaration of going to a new place and experiencing a new culture more times than I wish to count. Likewise, I felt the brunt of shock that comes with it. I don't know if I was prepared for this year, or if there was any way for me to even contemplate preparation. But I have grown as a person, traveller, and scholar from my time abroad. Being a part of an independence rally in Catalonia or walking along remnants of the Berlin Wall are both things I did not imagine myself doing when I began this journey. But both events, and so much more, actually happened to me. I sometimes find myself describing a new experience to a family member with a sudden need to pinch myself. Is this actually real? YES. Even though I miss home often, sometimes to the point of tears, I make an effort to be present - taking in my surroundings and experiences at all times. I have made as many connections here as I have at home and I have found friends here that I truly cherish and will miss greatly upon returning to the USA.

My first stop stateside is good 'ole - Home Sweet Hollins. That's right, I will be at Hollins for Senior Week 2015. It hadn't hit me that it has been almost a full, 365 days since I last sat in a rocking chair on Main. Or had a good laugh with Miss. Hazel. Or stepped foot in my home away from home away from home - Pleasants. This time away has, ironically, brought me closer to Hollins. I feel more connected to the mission and mantra of the university. Being able to observe the institution while acting as a representative of Hollins while abroad has affirmed my belief in what it stands for - people who are going places start at Hollins. I sure did.

Britain's seven-way debate

Tayler Morris '16

On April 2nd of this year, seven parties, some regional and others national, participated in a seven-way debate. Debates are relatively new to the British General Election; the first real debate occurred in the 2010 General Election, representing only three parties. With seven parties present, one can almost understand the current Prime Minister's reluctance to participate. However, it is important to understand the purpose of this particular debate. With fewer than 40 days until the vote, this debate intends to reach the respective audience of each party, reaffirm its platform, and distance itself as far as possible from Farage, of UKIP.

The smaller parties (Green, Scottish National, UKIP, and Cymru (Wales)) took advantage of the two-hour time slot by speaking directly to their base, although it is unlikely that any of them will take a majority of seats, perhaps being forced to join a coalition after the election. Leanne Wood, Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales) took every opportunity to mention Welsh concerns and her plans to improve conditions in the Union. The opportunity to join this debate may benefit her the most, as her party is not the majority party in Wales. The larger parties, Liberal Democrats, Labour, and Conservatives spent the entire time blaming each other for issues in the economy, national health care and immigration.

Even though there is not be a winner/loser in this debate, I would have to say the ladies, as a whole, won this one. Nicola Sturgeon of SNP was great; concise, firm, and passionate. She came out ahead this evening; successfully relaying her goal for Scotland (to ultimately be independent) and willingness to join a like-minded coalition - most likely with the left-leaning Labour Party.

Leanne Wood was also very likable and really showed she cared for Wales and Great Britain. When Farage attacked HIV patients, claiming that 60 percent of HIV patients in the UK are foreign born and thus UK should close its borders, Leanne quickly put him in his place, telling him to stop scapegoating immigrants and behaving shamefully. Last, Natalie Bennett of the Green Party may have redeemed herself. Still recovering from a "brain fade" moment earlier in the spring, during the debate she was firm and even a bit aggressive.

Out of the other leaders, Nick Clegg (Center, Liberal Democrats) seemed very 'American' during the debate, repeating one liners like "cut less and borrow less" and "open for business, not open for abuse." Very well rehearsed and, I think, a generally well-meaning politician, Clegg performed well.

CONTINUED ON 9

Fluent in embarrassment: Tayler shares hilarious mishaps from abroad

Barcelona: Getting "tengo miedo" (I am afraid) mixed up with "tengo mierda" (I have shit) in front of my seven-year old house brother.

Barcelona: On my first day, seeing a sign on the subway and panicking, "I have no idea what it says. I don't speak Spanish. I've made a mistake." The sign wasn't in Spanish. It was Catalan. And it said exit.

Madrid: Meeting new people and trying to shake hands before quickly remembering where I was and trying to give "besos" (kisses) instead. It was like playing an introduction game of tag. I looked like an idiot.

Madrid: Meeting my friend's grandmother, and freezing up. She asked "puedes hablar en castellano?" (Can you speak Spanish?). I continued with a blank stare. She walked away. My friend said "of course she can" and told me to say something. All I could get out was, *Hola*.

Britain's seven-way debate continued

Farage did what he does best. Make funny faces, wave his hands in the air in mock-confusion, and blame non-British people for every problem the United Kingdom faces. UKIP offers no real policy reform and is anti-European. Its nationalism barely hides its blatant bigotry and xenophobic attitude. There was one moment in which I thought, this guy has a point. During the immigration session, he raised the point that Prime Minister Cameron has tried, and failed, to work with the European Union over the flow of immigration. This is because the EU, at its core, is about mobility of people and goods, which cannot be changed.

Prime Minister, David Cameron, of the Conservatives (Tories) did not set out to win this debate. All he wanted was for Ed Miliband, of the Labour Party, to not win or look any better than him. The entire two hours featured Cameron and Miliband throwing blows at each other, much to my amusement. Cameron expected all of Miliband's attacks and tried, although sometimes unsuccessfully, to have a quick rebuttal. Miliband was a broken record, just blaming Cameron and the Tories for what's wrong with the state of Britain's economy and National Health Service.

It will be interesting to see what impact this debate has in the general election. Will this boost smaller parties in the overall polls? Will there be more "aisle crossing" coalitions? Or will there be a clear majority in Parliament? From one political scientist to another, the results on May 7th are guaranteed to be exciting!

#BlackLivesMatter

Amaris Elliott '15

The election of 2008 was a historic moment for the United States as it elected its first African American president. Most can recall media speculation about a "post-racial" period in America in which racism would no longer exist; which, even at the time seemed blissfully hopeful. Looking back on the domestic events that took place during Obama's two terms in office, it is impossible to say that America has achieved a post-racial period.

On February 26, 2012 in Sanford, Florida, George Zimmerman shot and killed unarmed, 17-year old Trayvon Martin. In July of 2013, a grand jury decided to acquit Zimmerman for the murder. Although tragic, the case was not atypical. For years, members of the civil rights community have expressed concerns for the unusually high amount of African American arrest-related deaths in the US. However, this issue was set on fire during Obama's second term when media picked up the Martin and several similar stories. Across the nation a disgusting pattern of racism, police brutality and injustice emerged.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the following months similar stories appeared with frightening frequency. Jordan Davis, 17, was shot and killed in Jacksonville, Florida on November 23, 2012 by a white police officer. So was Renisha McBride, 19, in Dearborn Heights, Michigan on November 2, 2013. July 17, 2014, Eric Garner, 43, was choked to death in New York City. John Crawford, 22, was killed in Beavercreek, Ohio on August 5, 2014. Four days later, in Ferguson, Missouri, Michael Brown was shot and killed by police. Tamir Rice was only twelve years old on November 23, 2014 when an officer in Cleveland, Ohio killed him. That officer remains on restricted duty; the officers involved in the murders of Crawford, Garner and Brown were not indicted at all. Thankfully Davis' and McBride's killers were found guilty and jailed, but even that small token of justice does not erase the pretense of those murders.

The killings and the many unsatisfactory court decisions they produced have sparked massive protest throughout the United States. The movement has come to be known as, "*Black Lives Matter*." *CONTINUED ON 10*

#IStandWithIsrael

Deborah Birch '15

"No matter which side of the aisle you sit on, you stand with Israel." – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

On March 3, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu traveled to the United States to address a joint session of Congress about the threat that a nuclear Iran poses to not only our strongest ally in the Middle East, but also to the United States and the rest of the world. Prime Minister Netanyahu emphasized throughout his speech that supporting Israel should not be a partisan issue and that he does not wish for it to cause divide within United States politics, however this issue has become deeply rooted within our political system, and the Obama Administration has done nothing but cause tension with the Israeli Prime Minister and show contempt towards the Israeli people. The Administration even went as far as supporting Netanyahu's opponent in his election and not even calling the Prime Minister to congratulate him on his re-election.

President Obama and his administration were worried about what the Prime Minister would say during his speech to the joint session of Congress. There is only one logical explanation for this and that is because they knew that he would stand up in front of a national audience and tell the truth about the P5+1 deal that was just tentatively agreed upon between Iran and the other world powers.

Netanyahu isn't afraid to stand up and speak the truth about the threats his country and people face because he constantly has to stand up alone and state these threats to other nations. Three-fourths of the Israeli people trust their Prime Minister when it comes to issues of national security because he has long been vocal in expressing the fact that one of the larger foreign policy goals of the Iranian regime is to annihilate Israel. Just a few days before this tentative deal was reached, Iran stated that "the destruction of Israel is non-negotiable," and it will continue to supply its terror proxies with weapons to attack Israel. Not to mention that the administration knows that Congress would never approve this deal; who should get to debate and vote on approval of the deal?

Prime Minister Netanyahu and Members of Congress from both sides have expressed their beliefs that the P5+1 deal is deeply flawed and have brought attention to a lot of questions that have gone unanswered. Why doesn't the framework address Iran's intercontinental ballistic missile program, whose sole purpose is to carry nuclear payloads?

CONTINUED ON 11



Photo Credit: iconsquare.com

#BlackLivesMatter continued

The movement includes a variety of participant groups and organizations ranging from the NAACP to the Girl Scouts of America, including Hollins. Students participated in a die-in protest at Moody dining hall, followed by a community chant of "black lives matter," as part of the effort. The surrounding Roanoke community also hosted various protests; during the month of December many will recall seeing activists along the sides of city-streets holding signs reading, "Black Lives Matter." On January 2, the community marched through town, ending with a rally at the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial. Protests continue while activists carefully watch the news for new injustices and updates to past ones.

On February 24 of this year, the Justice Department announced that it would not file federal charges in the Trayvon Martin case. Similarly, the DOJ decided on March 4 that it would not charge officer Darren Wilson for the death of Michael Brown. That same day the department released a review of the Ferguson police force that condemned its use of racially discriminatory tactics; the police chief subsequently stepped down. The protest at the Ferguson police department reheated after this announcement resulting in the shooting of two officers on March 11.

Amid the chaos and sadness of the last three years, it has become clear that there is a lot of space between the present and justice and liberty for all. The Black Lives Matter movement is a critical part of the encompassing struggle for social equality. Today, *#blacklivesmatter* so that one day all lives may.

#IStandWithIsrael continued

What is to stop Iran from using the over one hundred billion dollars that will be unfrozen as part of this agreement to fund aggression and terror in Iraq, Syrian, Lebanon, Yemen and elsewhere? How will this deal differ from the deal in North Korea, where the international community gave similar assurances? Why will Iran be allowed to continue R&D on centrifuges far more advanced than those currently in its possession? What will be the fate of Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium? How can the international community agree to allow the removal of most of the deal's restrictions on Iran's nuclear program even if Iran remains a terror-sponsoring regime? Are sanctions being removed in phases, as the P5+1 claims, or all at once, as Iran claims?

The blunt truth is that we have no idea what the answer is to any of these questions, but the best example we have to go on is the deal that was reached with North Korea, which has absolutely failed to be successful in stopping them from building their nuclear program and arsenal. When a country is absolutely determined to build a nuclear program, a deal such as this one won't stop it. If we truly want to stop Iran from further development of its nuclear program, we need to listen to Prime Minister Netanyahu on how we should not settle when it comes to a deal. We need to stand firm and demand more from Iran and if it is not willing to accept harsh sanctions, then we need to walk away from the table until it is willing to seriously negotiate. It is imperative to not only the safety of the people of Israel, but also to combat terror that we #StandWithIsrael and Prime Minister Netanyahu, and it is long past time for the American people to tell President Obama that #IStandWithIsrael when it comes to combating Iran's nuclear program.

Technology, social change in Cuba

Hilla Haidari '16

The role of digital technology in the fomentation of popular uprisings like the Arab Spring, international Occupy movements, and most recently, the Ferguson protests, has been undeniably profound. In a country like Cuba, however, where technological devices are luxuries and the government monitors activity, the presence of digital technology has not been conducive to the same revolutionary activity seen in other regions. Despite the economic and political limitations, Cubans are still accessing a variety of Internet content, a phenomenon that is increasing recognition of the country's contradictions and strengthening dissident views.

Today in Cuba, the USB best symbolizes the revolutionary spirit that underscores the value of sharing. Although Cuba has an official Internet penetration rate of 5%, the island country's citizens stay connected with one another and the rest of the world by transferring videos, documents, and pictures through a memory stick and accessing them in a shared environment. Among the content that they pass along are films from American cinema. The good, the bad, and the ugly of Hollywood permeate through the government's content restrictions rather easily. In this sense, the United States' soft diplomacy eclipses official governmental actions in molding the vision that the lay Cuban has of "Los Norteamericanos."

The understanding of American people that Cubans receive from Hollywood films is overwhelmingly positive. A university classmate recently shared with me his experience of viewing *Mac and Devin Go to High School*, a shoddy film about the adolescence of its two pothead protagonists, played by American rappers Snoop Dogg and Wiz Khalifa. Arguably one of the most forgettable films in American cinema, the movie—and many more like it—significantly affect the way Cubans view Americans. Meanwhile the Cuban government declares the menacing nature of the U.S. and reaffirms the state of war between the two nations, Cubans themselves view the sophomoric, sometimes self-deprecating characters in American cinema and wonder, "What threat?" It's important to point out that, although Cubans acknowledge the relative innocuousness of individual Americans citizens, they do not simultaneously entirely disregard the poisonous nature of the U.S. government's presence in Cuba. Nevertheless, the images rendered in American cinema, and even the artistic adeptness of the better American movies, provide a juxtaposition with which Cubans compare their lives.

CONTINUED ON 12



Photo Credit: time.com

Technology, social change in Cuba continued

With frequent shortages in consumer goods, frustration with the sluggish bureaucracy, and other daily irritations, Cubans do not need to be told that they have it tough. However, the mere recognition of the stark disparity between the livelihoods in the two countries exacerbates the frustration.

Although the front page of the *Granma* hails the successes of the Cuban education system, the merit of the work that Cuban doctors achieve throughout the world, and the growth in industry—all commendable achievements—the lay Cuban sees sweeping views of magnificent American cities in panoramic shots of Hollywood films and views the successes of American capitalism—and by extension, the failures of socialism. Indeed many Cubans to whom I've spoken have a rather dismal, almost comical, view of socialism in general—not just Cuban socialism.

In a recent economic debate with a Cuban artist and cynic of socialism, I highlighted, “Karl Marx himself wrote that to achieve a communist utopia, a society first has to attain a high stage of capitalism in order to gain sufficient capital that can then be distributed to the masses. Neither the Soviet Union nor Cuba did that. Therefore you can't say that

the Cuban, though, such dry does not have much value. instead, is his enormous talent opportunities; he can neither considering the scarce amount of the country with ease to sell to him the Cuban government it was supposed to, not least

itself is not willing to admit that is has made mistakes.

“...the increased recognition of the country's insufficiencies, as juxtaposed with the middle-class excesses of the United States portrayed in American media, are strengthening the Cubans' frustrations.”

socialism doesn't work.” For and analytical evaluation What the artist recognizes, and the tremendous lost sell artwork in Cuba, of buyers, nor travel outside it. It does not matter much did not execute socialism as because the government

In this sense, the adamant ideology of the Cuban government and its rampant propaganda are backfiring. The cut-and-dried rhetoric championing socialism and the Revolution is irrelevant and frustrating enough when juxtaposed with the harsh realities of Cuban livelihood. However the increased recognition of the country's insufficiencies, as juxtaposed with the middle-class excesses of the United States portrayed in American media, are strengthening the Cubans' frustrations.

Adding fuel to the fire is the recognizable amount of intellectual dissidence that is entering the country through enigmatic channels, including video clips and newspaper articles from the largely right-wing Cuban communities in Miami. The same Cuban artist recently showed me a video from the Miami-based program, “El Espejo.” In it, the hosts invite political analysts who thoroughly assess the structural and societal racism existent in Cuba, accompanied by Cuban citizens' affirmations. Undoubtedly, such blatant criticism of the government would never access mainstream media in Cuba. In fact, when in 2013, prominent Afro-Cuban intellectual Roberto Zurbano wrote a New York Times piece discussing the Revolution's failure to address racism, he promptly lost his position in the Casa de Las Americas, a Havana organization dedicated to exhibiting the cultural richness of Central and South America. Suffice it to say intellectual diversity is lacking in Cuba. Nevertheless, through a rather secure and subtle subterfuge, Cubans receive dissident points of view from sources outside the country. “No one really knows the sources of the videos,” the artist tells me. “One person gets it from another and passes it along.” In a 2013 book titled *Cuban Revelations*, author Marc Frank writes that, “I have no doubt that coping with the Internet is one of the greatest political challenges Cuban authorities have ever faced.”

During a chat with Frank, in response to my question about the normalization of relations between Cuba and the U.S., the author noted only half-jokingly that the U.S. has never been able to overthrow a government with which it does not have relations, implying that normalization of diplomatic relations is the first step in the U.S.'s attempt to oust the Castro regime. However, the presence of an American embassy in Havana may not be the most vital tool to achieving that end. Already, the Castro government is in considerable ways capitulating to its citizens' demands for greater freedom. In 2011, it stopped banning dissident blogs and the critical Cuban blogger community has since risen to international prominence. Hence the proliferation of information technology in the hands of lay Cuban citizens, instead, should have the most formative role in the future of the Cuban leadership. Whether this rise in access to information spells revolution or simply institutional change is not certain.

Chocolate, genocide, ethics of food choice

Elizabeth Trout '17

For those of us who gathered in the Green Drawing Room on April, 21st chocolate will never be the same.

Dr. Courtney Thomas, a former student of our very own Dr. Ra, came to present her research on the political unrest in Cote d'Ivoire and its relationship to Chocolate.

I think everyone who came to the lecture enjoyed it immensely. Dr. Thomas is a dynamic speaker and her passion for the subject she was presenting was evident from start to finish in her lecture. But who are we kidding; it's hard not to be passionate about chocolate.

The lecture essentially put post-colonialism in perspective with a case study. When the French left the Ivory Coast they left a government that favored southern tribes and a one-crop economy that relied on the chocolate plantations located in the north. With a government that is legally obligated to purchase the chocolate crop at a fixed rate and then present it to the global market, the political and economic power of the Ivory Coast are inextricably tied.

In 2010, after a contested election, the President, who was not fairly elected, but had the support of the southern government used the money from the chocolate market to arm his supporters and slaughter the supporters of his opponent. His opponent quickly established a black market for the chocolate in order to fight back and ultimately prevailed.

Dr. Thomas was able to present this information in a way that I couldn't dream of, and the subject is fascinating. The effects of post-colonialism are vividly seen in this relationship between food, commodities, and politicicide. In late 2010 and early 2011, every piece of chocolate we ate was supporting one side of a very bloody fight, one that the rest of the world ignored.

Ultimately the lecture was informative, engaging and absolutely worth missing part of the Stanley Cup playoffs for in my humble opinion.

I hope that as we progress into next year we continue to bring such high quality speakers and that these lectures are attended with increasing vehemence. It is through these lectures that we often see our classroom experience illuminated in practice.

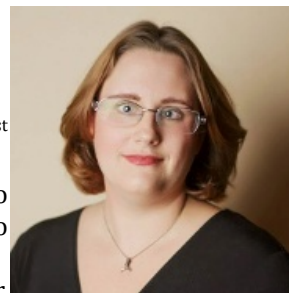


Photo Credit: <https://www.psci.vt.edu>

Student and Alumnae News:



Victoria West '15 (left)
Communications/Political Science majors

During J-Term, Tori worked as the Marketing and Communications Intern for the American Composites Manufacturers Association in Arlington, VA. She spent the spring term as Public Relations Intern for the Town of Christiansburg. Her thesis, "*Hope: a rhetorical analysis of Barack Obama's national eulogies*," won the library's Undergraduate Research Award for the Senior/ Junior category, and she presented it at the Eastern Communication Scholars Conference in April. Tori was also honor with the Pi Sigma Alpha award for having the highest GPA in Political Science courses.

Elizabeth Trout '17 (right)
Communications/Political Science majors

Elizabeth spent her summer interning with the political administrator for Goodlatte For Congress. This year, she collaborated with Emili McPhail '18, Amanda McVey '18, and Amelia Verkerk '18 to produce a paper titled "*Historical Hysteria*," which one third place in the honors program category at this year's undergraduate research awards.



More Student and Alumnae News:

Lachelle Roddy '15 (right)
Political Science major

Lachelle interned at the Women's Legal Centre in South Africa on a paralegal team for sex workers, preparing court documents and attending court cases. Her team released a transgender woman from an all male prison and opened a new case against the police department. She then developed a policy on transgender prisoners' rights which is currently being reviewed by the Department of Correctional Facilities. Lachelle went on outreach trips to hand out condoms, record statements of abuse, and conduct need based assessments while there. She also developed a new protocol and outreach program in response, which is being reviewed by Child Welfare South Africa. On campus, Lachelle recently won first place in the contemporary issues category at the library's undergraduate research award for her paper, *"Brenda's Baby's Got a Gun: open carry activism as a tool for white privilege."* She also accepted a position as a legal assistant with the American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia.

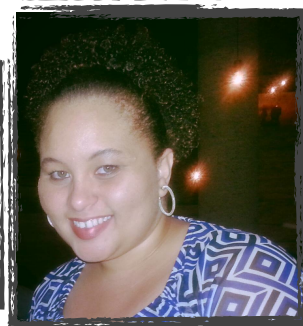


Deborah Birch '15 (left)
Political Science major

Deborah is graduating in December of this year and is in her second term as the Digital Communications Director for the College Republicans Federations of Virginia. During J-Term she interned for the College Republican National Committee, where she continues to work. After graduation, she has job offers in Washington D.C. and Boston, doing strategic communications and advocacy.

Patrice Lawrence '13 (right)
Political Science major

Patrice was recently accepted into the New York School of Law as well as the New England School of Law.



Christine Sommerset '14 (left)
Political Science major

Christine was accepted into the Postsecondary Administration and Student Affairs program at the University of Southern California.